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Crazy old town, or an open air asylum

"An open air asylum". A smart definition for Dublin, as the place where everything can happen, even happiness.

A definition given by someone who knows what happiness is, my friend **Marco Giannantonio**. He was having lunch with me, Isabella (his companion of life, work and trip), and [Ronan Sheehan](#), last Saturday morning, when he defined "Open air asylum" Dublin and the very first moment (and reason why) he decided he was going live there.

Dublin is the place where you can launch a book written in Italian and receive by people all the attentions, as if language was nothing more than a stupid human way to complicate simple things. Dubliners seem not to believe in this triviality of language.

Everything is easier to communicate when to launch the book is someone like Ronan Sheehan. [Ronan Sheehan](#) is a Dubliner. His ancestors were mentioned in Finnegans Wake, and in other Joyce's works. Moreover, he held lectures about Ulysses at the University College of Dublin and wrote books about Dublin, which are presently studied. But, more than all this, **Ronan wants the people to understand and "feel" what he talks about.** For Ronan, **telling is not enough, he wants to explain. To do that, he observes those who are in front of him, and after that, he talks.** I don't know how many times in a life, an author of his kind, whose works are translated in more languages, (in Italy, Sellerio edited the Italian edition of *Boy with an injured eye*), devotes so much of his time to someone who's just trying to follow the way of a story, like in my case.

His questions made me find answers about James' story and Dublin I wouldn't have thought about otherwise.

In Dublin your friends, your old friends, meet.

As if it were so normal to leave Milan, Veneto, Lugano, Prague just for a book launching and a couple of Guinness. On Friday, May 13th, late at night, just met at Trinity College, Temple Bar streets were calling us. So did the music coming from a pub.

In Dublin, just entered a pub, people look at you and smile. In Dublin a couple in their 50s, already a little full of alcohol and life, invites you to sit next to them and sing "Dirty old town".

In Dublin, an old gentleman playing in the street asks you to save a dance for him, and you accept.

And then, in Dublin there is a piece of Italy, taking Energy from the land. Its name is [Pinocchio](#) and it's a house, conventionally defined restaurant, where people enters, eats, shares and then discovers that, like the coffee cup trace on the table, a smile has remained on their faces.

Sabrina Barbante

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